MicroProse Software

SPITFIRE ACE

by Sid Meier
for MicroProse Software

GAME OVERVIEW

SPITFIRE ACE is a game which callenges your nerve, flying skill, and knowledge of air to air combat tactics. You fly your World War II plane against a computer controlled airplane(s) in one of fourteen different scenarios. Your goal is to complete five missions and become an ACE!

LOADING THE GAME

DISK: Turn on your disk drive and insert the game diskette. Remove all cartridges from the computer. Power up your computer and turn on your video screen. The game will load and begin automatically after about one minute. Leave the game disk in the disk drive until the first game has been played.

CASSETTE: Place Atari BASIC cartridge in computer. Insert cassette in recorder, (rewind if necessary), depress PLAY. Type CLOAD and press RETURN twice. After 2 or 3 minutes computer will display "Ready". Type RUN and press RETURN. Game will begin in about 4 minutes.

GAME OPTIONS

The first screen allows you to indicate the number of players and to select the desired game scenario. This screen displays the game title followed by a list of the scenarios available. See the "SCENARIOS" section for a description of each scenario. Scenario 1 is recommended for beginners. Press the OPTION key until the desired scenario number appears at the bottom of the screen. Press the SELECT key until the desired number of players appears at the bottom of the screen. Up to four players may play. Then press START.

The next screen summarizes your mission in this scenario, indicates the scores and victories accumulated so far (if any), and allows you to select the difficulty level and number of opposing aircraft (1 or 2). Difficulty level 0 is the easiest, level 3 is the most difficult. Use the OPTION key to make the difficulty selection and the SELECT key to select the number of planes. To skip this scenario, press OPTION and SELECT together. In multi-player games the player whose turn is next is indicated on the "YOUR MISSION" line.

Press START when you are ready to begin. In about five seconds the game will commence. There will be a brief delay at the beginning of the first game round as the disk is verified. After this is completed you may remove the game disk. To PAUSE the game press the space bar once. When you are ready to resume, press the space bar again.

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THE GAME DISPLAY

Your instrument panel at the bottom of the screen provides you with the following information:

MIRROR: If your opponent is behind you he will generally appear in your rear-view mirror. This indicates where and how far away he is. The mirror is of little use in the night scenarios.

SPEED: Your current speed in knots per hour. If your speed drops below 120 knots you will stall and controlling the plane will be difficult.

ALTITUDE: Your current altitude in feet. Allowing your altitude to fall below zero will result in the immediate termination of your mission.

COURSE: The direction in which your plane is flying, expressed in degrees. Zero degrees is due North, 90 degrees is East, 180 degrees is South, and 270 degrees is West.

AMMO: The number of bursts of ammunition remaining in your guns.

POWER: Your current throttle setting (0 to 20). Twenty is maximum power.

The upper portion of the screen shows the view out of your windscreen. The object in the center of the screen is your gunsight. The sky and ground are light blue and green respectively. The orientation of the horizon indicates your current altitude. If the horizon is below your sight you are climbing. If the horizon is above your sight you are diving. If the horizon is tilted to the right you are banked to the left. If the horizon is tilted to the left you are banked to the right. Your opponent's plane(s) will be visible if he is in front of you.

FLYING YOUR AIRPLANE

In order to skillfully fly your plane, you must learn to turn, climb, and dive. As you become more proficient you will find yourself doing loops, rolls, and split-S maneuvres.

To cause your plane to turn you must bank (tilt) your plane. Bank is controlled by pressing the first joystick to one side or the other. The steeper your plane is banked, the more rapid the turn will be. The most rapid turn occurs when the horizon appears to be vertical. Banking further puts you into an inverted flight altitude and reduces the turn rate.

To cause your plane to climb, pull back on the stick. This pulls the nose of your plane up. Your speed will generally decrease when climbing. If your have enough speed you can loop or half-loop the plane by pulling back until the horizon appears again.

To dive push the stick forward. Your speed will increase when diving. If your plane is steeply banked, it is much less responsive to the elevator: climbing and diving are more difficult. This situation often results in a snap roll or spin. During a spin your plane will gyrate uncontrollably.

To fire your guns, press the trigger on joystick one. You will see your tracers through the forward windscreen. Your opponent's plane will flash red if your bullets hit. Your guns fire straight ahead, note the effect of turning or changes altitude on the path of the bullets. Your ammunition is limited, close range shots are recommended. Try to lead your opponent's plane if he is not flying directly towards or away from you. Line up your next shot immediately, don't wait!

Joystick two controls your throttle. Pressing it forward increases power, pulling it back decreases power. Press the trigger on joystick two if you wish to attempt to bail out. Reduce speed before trying to bail out. (Bailout below 2000 feet or above 150 knots is not likely to be successful.)

COMBAT TACTICS

Always keep in mind that this game takes place in a three dimensional airspace. Try to visualize where your opponent is relative to your plane and what maneuvre you are executing. Note also in what direction your opponent is flying. Try to get behind him or cause him to fly into your sights.

This requires aggressive flying. Try to keep your opponent in front of you. If he gets behind you, try an Immelmann or split-S (a half-roll followed by a half-loop). Turning contests are sometimes successful against enemy bombers but it is usually hard to get a clean shot against a nimble Messerschmitt fighter.

If your opponent gets behind you keep your eye on the rear-view mirror. If he is close and closing, take evasive action immediately. A tight turn or deliberate stall are two possibilities.

Your opponent's plane also fires straight ahead, so you are in danger when you see him heading towards you. The screen will flash red when you are hit. If your power drops to zero you have been severely damaged. Try to ditch or bail out.

THE SCENARIOS

FRANCE

You are patrolling over eastern France with the RAF Expeditionary Force. The German "Blitzkrieg" is about to overwhelm France and the Low Countries. Ahead of you flies a Dornier 17 returning from a reconnaisance mission. Your guns are loaded and primed. Shoot him down.

DUNKIRK

As the German Panzer divisions roll through the Allied defenses, the British Expeditionary Force retreats to Dunkirk to await evacuation to England. German bombers and RAF fighters tangle over the crowded beach. Ahead of you a Stuka dive bomber is pushing over into a screaming dive.

FIGHTER SWEEP

As the Battle of Britain begins, the Luftwaffe sends massive fighter sweeps to challenge and destroy the RAF. Your squadron has been vectored to intercept a group of Messershmitt 109 fighters: "Bogies at 90 degrees - angels 10" (10,000 feet altitude).

NIGHT FIGHTER

Heavy daytime losses causes the Luftwaffe to attempt night bombing of English cities. Ground radar reports a German intruder in your section. Off to the left you notice a glimmer of reflected moonlight and bank your night fighter to investigate.

AIRBASE ATTACK

In an attempt to destroy the RAF, the Luftwaffe launches a series of attacks on RAF fighter bases. A surprise strike has caught your squadron on the ground. As you scramble to your plane and lift off the runway the German fighters begin their strafing run. A quick check of your mirror reveals a fighter on your tail.

BLITZ

As the Battle of Britain reaches its peak, the Luftwaffe attacks London with massive night bombing raids. RAF squadrons intercept and rip into these groups as they approach. As the docks of London blaze below you spot a bomber group above you.

LONDON
Strong fighter groups accompany many of the German night raids. The speedy Spitfires engage the fighters while the RAF Hurricanes attack the Luftwaffe bombers. As your Spitfire climbs to intercept an enemy formation, the Me-109s drop to meet you.

MALTA
RAF strikes launched from the Mediteranean island of Malta disrupt supply convoys for Rommel's Africa Corps. Luftwaffe bombers pound the island to neutralize this threat. A small group of RAF pilots battle the incessant strikes. You scramble to intercept a Stuka strike sweeping in from the north.

NORTH AFRICA
In the desert wastes of North Africa, air reconnaissance plays an important role. You are flying a slow Baltimore bomber on a long range mission when you are jumped by German desert fighters.

COLOGNE
The RAF Bomber Command embarks upon a campaign of strategic night bombing of German cities. A major raid is in progress on the city of Cologne when your Blenheim bomber is attacked by Luftwaffe night fighters.

D-DAY
You are flying a ground suppression mission as part of the massive air support for the D-Day invasion. As you begin a low strafing run on a Luftwaffe airfield, you spot a FW-190 fighter lifting off the end of the runway.

V-1
The successful D-Day invasion spells the beginning of the end for the Third Reich. In a desperate attempt to reverse the tide, V-1 "Buzz Bombs" are launched against London. Standing RAF fighter patrols are kept airborne to try to shoot down these speedy pilotless drones.

RUHR
The RAF night bombing campaign continues with a major attack on the Ruhr valley. British and German night fighters tangle in the moonlit skies above this strategic target.

ME 262
Late in the war the Luftwaffe introduces the Messerschmitt 262 rocket powered interceptor. In spite of its limited endurance, this high speed fighter is a serious threat to the Allied bomber offensive. As you escort a bomber strike an ME 262 streaks up from below.

RESULTS
The object of the game is to accumulate five (5) victories and become an official "ACE". At the end of the game you will receive a ranking based on victories, fuel used, damage, and ammunition used. Rankings are Rookie, Wingman, Pilot, Ace, and W.G.F.P. (World's Greatest Fighter Pilot!)

There can be three results from a scenario: A VICTORY counts towards your total and allows you to continue to the next scenario, NO RESULT allows you to continue but does not contribute to your victory total, a LOSS ends the game. There are a number of ways in which a scenario may end:

1. You shoot down your opponent(s).
   This always counts as a VICTORY.

2. The time limit expires or you fly out of range of your opponent.
   This counts as NO RESULT.

3. You bail out of your plane successfully.
   Press the trigger on joystick two to attempt to bail out. You have a better chance if your speed is low.
   This counts as NO RESULT.

4. You bail out and are captured or injured.
   This always counts as a LOSS.

5. You force land your plane.
   You may land your plane by slowly and gently taking it to zero altitude. If you land on enemy territory you may be captured.
   Results are the same as 3 or 4.

6. You crash.
   This always counts as a LOSS.

ADVANCED COMBAT AEROBATICS

Loop - Build up speed. Pull back on the stick. You will climb and roll onto your back. Keep the stick back as you begin to dive until the horizon reappears again. You will be flying level in the same direction in which you started. Used to get behind a plane close on your tail.

Split-S - from level flight roll until you are flying inverted. Pull back on the stick until the horizon dissappears and appears again. Used to reverse direction quickly and lose altitude.

Immelmann Turn - Build up speed, then pull back on the stick until you have complete a half loop and are flying inverted. Now roll until you are level again. Used to reverse direction quickly while gaining altitude.

We hope that you will enjoy this MicroProse game. Please send us your comments on this game or suggestions for other games you would like to see. MicroProse is dedicated to bringing you the most entertaining and challenging computer simulations available.

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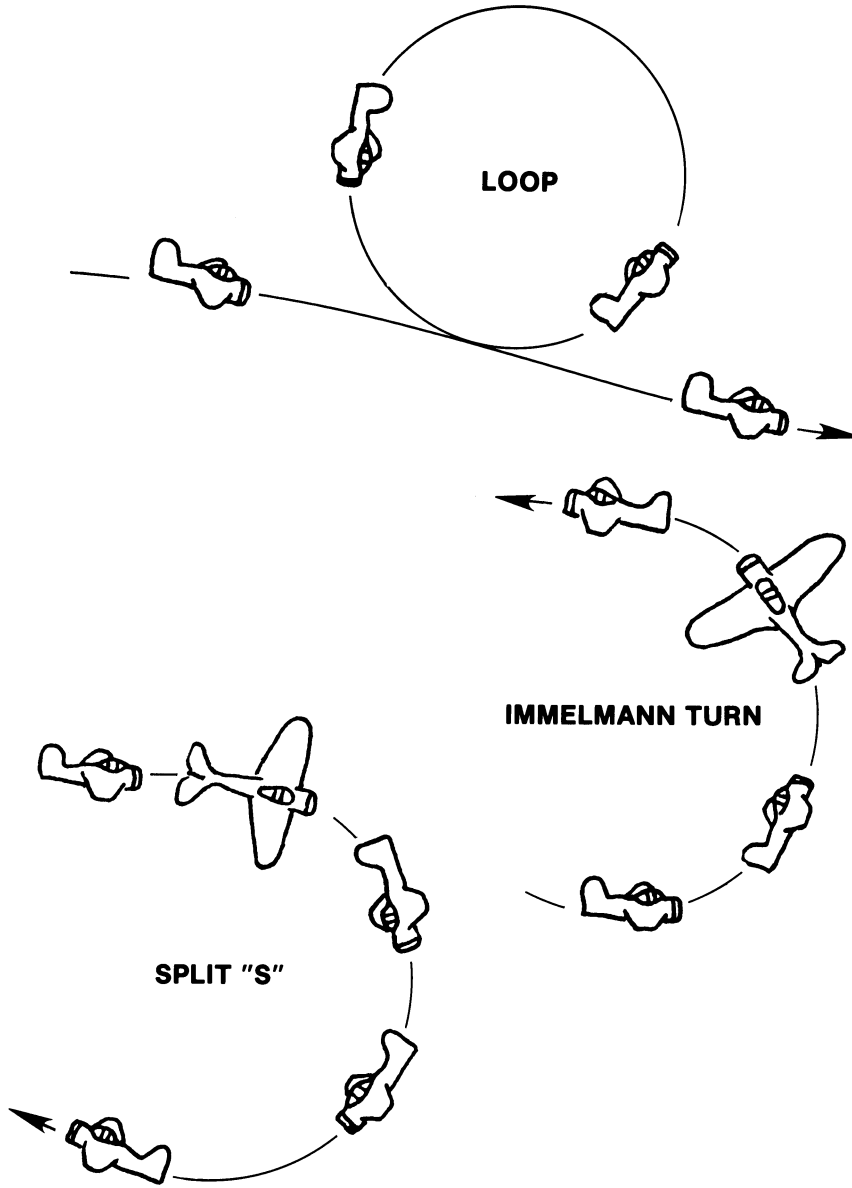
LOOP
IMMELMANN TURN
SPLIT "S"

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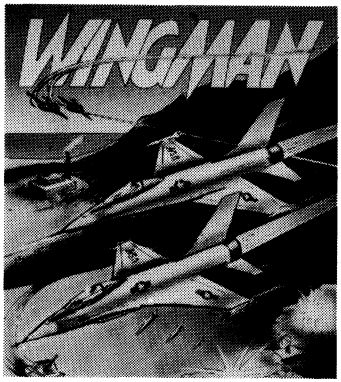

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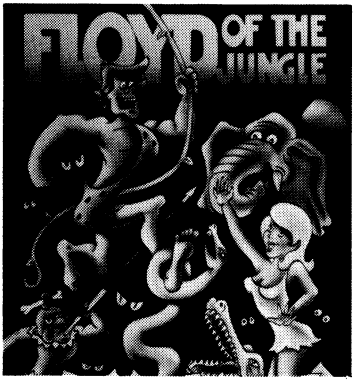

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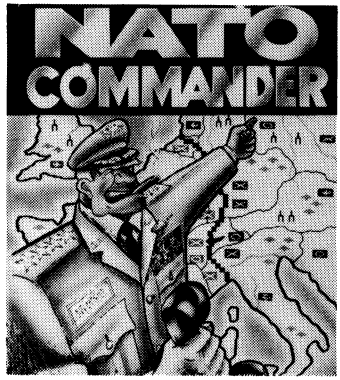

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